

concern themselves for the protection of one man or for the help of another, many of the Chinese soldiers took aim not at the marines who defended the walls, but at the spirits that were hovering above, and fired their bullets into the air, where they could harm no one at all. This continued for days.

Did the Chinese use no special devices to drive this little band out of their defences? Yes, they tried to use fire. Just to the north of the British legation, where the refugees were gathered, was the famous Han-lin library, the richest collection of literature in the world. In it was a cyclopedia of 360,000,000 words that far excels anything in Christian lands. The library was simply a priceless treasure. But these hated foreigners must be destroyed; and when the wind blew a gale from the north the Chinese set fire to their own precious library in order to roast out the foreigners. It was indeed a most serious moment. The heat was intense and growing more intense. All the able-bodied among the besieged turned out to fight the flames; the others betook themselves to prayer. Their prayer was answered. Soon the wind changed from north to south, and blew the flames over upon the Chinese houses. And no longer did the windows of the library remain as a place where enemies might hide and shoot down the defenders.

But how about the native Chinese? Were they not a burden? Nay, they were among the most useful of the defenders. For the soldiers were too few to guard the walls and also to build the barricades of sandbags. But the native Christians filled the bags and bravely put them in their places, thus giving a most valuable help.

Was the air filled with groanings on account of the privations of the siege? Nay. We have read of utterances of thankfulness which fell from the lips of those who were in such discomfort. With the thermometer at ninety-nine and the windows stuffed with sandbags, with perhaps forty people sleeping and eating in one room, and with only a limited amount of horseflesh to eat, yet as family after family sat down to eat, the voice of thankfulness to God was heard with a tenderness which is beyond expression.

Finally the last of the horseflesh was gone. Unknown to the besieged the enemy had been hard at work digging a mine under the main building of the British legation. The mine was completed, and the kegs of powder were in place, when the cannon of the troops that had marched up from Tien Tsin to relieve the ambassadors were heard thundering at the gates of Peking. Those who had been trying to destroy the Christians hastened, of course, to the defence of their city walls, only to meet with defeat. The Christians were delivered.

It was not without suffering. Sixty of the marines were killed and 140 were wounded. But the ambassadors and the Christians were delivered. And a lesson was given to the Chinese which will serve for the protection of Christians in that land for generations. Since that day the work of the Gospel has been greatly promoted.

T. E. C.

Devotional and Selections

DO NOT FRET.

Let us not live fretful lives. God will never stretch the line of our duty beyond the measure of our strength. We ought to live with the grace of flowers, with the joy of birds, with the freedom of wind and wave. Without question this is God's ideal of human life. We are expected to do no more than we can do with the time granted us, with the tools, the materials, and the opportunity at our disposal. We serve no Egyptian taskmaster who watches to double the tale of bricks, but a generous Lord who waits to make our duty our delight.

"If our love were but more simple,
We should take Him at His word,
And our lives would be all sunshine
In the sweetness of the Lord."

—William L. Watkinson.

A PRAYING CHURCH.

A prosperous church is a church which prays. It is written, "My house shall be called a house of prayer." We must never lose faith in prayer. We must never abandon prayer. We must never lose the spirit of prayer. A church can get on for a considerable time without singing, and can go on indefinitely with indifferent singing. A church may do well with poor preaching, and even without preaching of any kind. But a church without prayer is no church at all. We might as well expect a man to live without breathing as to expect a church to live without praying. Pray for the minister. Pray for the sick and afflicted. Pray for the children. Pray for the lost. Pray for the community. Pray for one another. Pray ye the Lord of the harvest that he may send forth laborers into his harvest. Pray without ceasing. Pray everywhere. Let the church be characterized by prayer, filled with the atmosphere of prayer, and crowded with the trophies of prayer.

THE GETHSEMANE OF LIFE.

For every one of us, sooner or later, the Gethsemane of life must come. It may be the Gethsemane of struggle and poverty and care; it may be the Gethsemane of long and weary sickness; it may be the Gethsemane of farewells that wring the heart by the deathbeds of those we love; it may be the Gethsemane of remorse and wellnigh despair for sins that we will not, but which we say can not be overcome. Well, my brethren, in that Gethsemane—aye, even in that Gethsemane of sin—no angel merely, but Christ Himself, who bore the burdens of our sins, will, if we seek Him, come to comfort us. He will, if, being in agony, we pray. He can be touched, he is touched, with the feeling of our infirmities. He, too, has trodden the winepress of agony alone; he, too, has lain face downward in the night upon the ground and the comfort which then came to him he has bequeathed to us—even the comfort, the help, the peace, the recovery, the light of hope, the faith, the sustaining arm, the healing anodyne of prayer.—Dean Farrar.